

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 167044

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EC, NATO, PO

SUBJECT: EC NINE POLITICAL COOPERATION RE PORTUGAL

REF: EC BRUSSELS 5608

1. APPRECIATE REFTEL REPORT ON NINE INTENTION TO CONSULT
ON PORTUGAL.

2. SHOULD ADDRESSEES BE APPROACHED BY MEMBERS OF THE NINE
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CONCERNING BILATERAL RPT BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE

US ON PORTUGAL, YOU SHOULD INDICATE THAT WE ARE PREPARED OF COURSE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON SUCH MATTERS OF CURRENT INTEREST. ON THE OTHER HAND, SHOULD FRENCH OFFICIAL, REPRESENTING NINE IN FRANCE'S CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN, OR OFFICIAL OF ANOTHER GOVERNMENT OF THE NINE APPROACH ADDRESSEES TO PROPOSE US-NINE CONSULTATIONS, YOU SHOULD INDICATE THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSULT ON PORTUGAL IF SUCH AN INITIATIVE REFLECTS THE FORMAL CORPORATE DESIRE OF THE NINE.

3. GIVEN EVOLUTION IN PORTUGUESE POLICIES, WE BELIEVE THAT US-NINE CONSULTATIONS ON POSITIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, WITH REGARD TO PORTUGUESE POLICIES IN AFRICA, COULD BE USEFUL IN SUPPORTING POSITIVE TRENDS IN PORTUGAL. HOWEVER, WE ALSO BELIEVE SUCH CONSULTATIONS SHOULD BE HELD ON A VERY

CONFIDENTIAL BASIS, IN ORDER TO AVOID IMPRESSION THAT THE US AND THE NINE AIMED TO APPLY COLLECTIVE PRESSURES ON PORTUGAL'S DOMESTIC POLICIES. SUCH AN IMPRESSION, OF COURSE, COULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, ESPECIALLY SINCE PORTUGAL IS A NATO ALLY, AND BECAUSE LEFTIST ELEMENTS IN PORTUGAL MAY BE ON LOOKOUT FOR AN ANTI-NATO PLANK FOR THEIR ELECTORAL PLATFORM. FOR THESE REASONS, IT MAY BE PREFERABLE, DEPENDING ON THE SUBJECT MATTER FOR US-NINE CONSULTATIONS, TO KEEP THEM LARGELY IN BILATERAL CHANNELS. ON ISSUES SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO NATO, WE WOULD ASSUME THAT NINE WOULD PREFER TO DISCUSS THESE BILATERALLY WITH US OR IN THE NATO FRAMEWORK.

4. BEGIN FYI. BECAUSE OF SENSITIVITIES OUTLINED ABOVE, IF ADDRESSEES ARE APPROACHED ON THIS MATTER, YOU SHOULD REPORT FULLY AND SEEK ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE. MEANWHILE, WE WILL WELCOME REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF NINE DISCUSSIONS ON PORTUGAL. END FYI.

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